

July 13, 2004

Mr. Alfred W. Speer
Clerk of the House of Representatives
State Capitol
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804

Mr. Glenn Koepp
Secretary of the Senate
State Capitol
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804

Re: House Bill No. 1 by Representative Alario
An Act making appropriations for the ordinary expenses of the executive branch of state government, pensions, public schools, public roads, public charities, and state institutions and providing with respect to the expenditure of said appropriations.

Dear Gentlemen:

As authorized by Article III, Section 18(B), and more particularly, Article IV, Section 5(G)(1) of the Constitution of Louisiana, I have exercised my authority to veto two items or provisions of the General Appropriation Bill.

VETO MESSAGE NO. 1:

Page 166, Lines 40-44:

This language directs the Department of Labor to identify and use \$3 million of the appropriated budget to develop and implement a competitive grants program to provide skills programs for newly released inmates. This is a permissible expenditure of Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funds. However, federal guidelines do not allow the state to dictate expenditure priorities to the Local Workforce Investment Boards, to which the majority of these funds are directed. For this reason, I am vetoing this language. However, my administration is committed to work with the local boards and encourages them to provide funding for these worthwhile programs.

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VETO MESSAGE NO. 2:

Page 284, Lines 37 through 42:

The language in this section authorizes the commissioner of administration, in the event additional revenues become available, to make the necessary adjustments to provide for employer contributions for retirement benefits for all departments and agencies of the state, including higher education institutions. Article VII, Section 10(E), of the Louisiana Constitution of 1974 provides that "Appropriations by the legislature...shall not exceed the official forecast in effect at the time the appropriations are made." An appropriation such as this is inconsistent with the intent of this constitutional provision. If additional revenue becomes available, it should be appropriated to address needs that exist at the time it is recognized. Further appropriation of funds, which may or may not become available, can represent a hollow promise to those expecting such appropriations.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Babineaux Blanco
Governor

jw